



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## Minutes 10-21-10

### Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2010

5:30-7:00PM

**Present:** Ethel Doyle, Kathy Hirsch, Cindy Sheridan, Cindy Bouvier, Jack Flood, Emily Vincent, Charlie Skidmore, Bryan Gallagher, Rebecca Meehan, Brian Dietz, Carlene Newell, Mary DeCoursey, Colleen Leger

**Attendees: 13**

#### **Welcome:**

Coalition members were asked to document volunteer hours for the previous month. Coalition members welcomed Rebecca Meehan, Teen Librarian at Robbins Library, to the group.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

##### Community Collection Day

November 13, 9:am-1:00pm. Colleen asked for volunteers to help promote the event. Flyers and leaflets are available to post/disseminate. Coalition members were asked to email Colleen if they had ideas for publicizing the drug take-back program, or if they knew of upcoming events where leaflets could be distributed. Charlie offered to email information about upcoming event to AHS parents. Colleen will email flyer to Charlie.

#### Coalition Corner

The Coalition is always looking for ideas for articles, and/or guest writers to work on the Coalition column in the Advocate. Charlie expressed interest in writing an article on teen sleepovers. The article would target parents of teens and pre-teens, and would highlight several problematic and/or risky behaviors occurring among kids at sleepovers. Specifically, there have been several incidents of bullying and harassment of Arlington high school students, which were instigated by their peers at sleepover parties. Hopefully, this article would help to raise awareness among parents, and contribute to changing parental attitudes about risky youth behaviors.

From this discussion stemmed a conversation about Form Spring, an online question/answer site that allows users to post comments anonymously about anyone/anything—essentially a web-based slambook. The anonymity of the postings has resulted in many instances of electronic bullying and harassment. It was suggested that AYHSC help educate parents about Form Spring and other forms of electronic communication, especially as they relate to bullying and harassment.

#### AYHSC Newsletter

Coalition members are encouraged to use the AYHSC Newsletter to promote programs, events, news, etc... from their respective organizations. Please email Colleen with information for the online newsletter. Colleen also asked that Coalition members help grow the newsletter recipient list by recommending contacts, or by forwarding the online newsletter to others in the community. It was recommended that elementary school principals and PTOs be added to the distribution list. Carlene will email Colleen with a list of PTO contacts. Mary D. suggested including contacts from local churches, including the Youth Minister from St. Eulalia's. Rebecca suggested reaching out to the homeschooling community in Arlington.

#### **Coalition Updates:**

##### Prescription Drug Disposal

Colleen provided a summary of the successful Town Day Drug Take-Back program. In total, AYHSC and the APD collected 3 large trash bags of pills, liquids and patches. All bottles and containers were separated from their contents and recycled. In addition, all controlled substances were separated and logged prior to disposal. In total, AYHSC collected 1,982.5 pills and 2,325 liquid cc's identified as narcotics/controlled substances.

During the take-back program, residents were asking for information on how to dispose of unwanted medications on an ongoing basis. Colleen spoke about installing a permanent drug disposal container at the Arlington Police Station, a service many

other communities are offering as well. Bryan said that this should be discussed with the Chief, as the APD would need to develop new policies and procedures to manage this program. Bryan also said that, with or without the official disposal program, residents may bring unwanted medications to the police station.

### Youth Council

Colleen and Kathy provided a summary of the topics addressed at the first Youth Council meeting of the year, which included creating a Facebook page, developing social norms messages, writing articles for the school newspaper/Arlington Advocate, and promoting alcohol and substance free activities in the community. Rebecca noted that the best way to reach most teens is through text, and suggested using SlipStick to email text messages to many recipients. Charlie thought this might be a good way to remind students that school events (i.e. dances and athletic events) are alcohol and drug free. We may want to enlist the help of SADD club members to help forward text messages to other high school students. A discussion about SADD day ensued. Charlie agreed to fund a multi-media presentation similar to last year's. This presentation will be used to stimulate conversation among advisory groups following the presentation. AYHSC was not able to fund this program, as the AYHSC budget had already been submitted to, and approved by DFC. Colleen suggested that the Coalition inform school groups of available funding for youth education before the budget is submitted for the following year. This would need to take place in January or February. Cindy B. suggested the Coalition consider funding the World of Difference program, which focuses on improving school culture.

### Bus Shelter Proposal

Colleen provided a summary of the October 4<sup>th</sup> BoS meeting. The Selectmen postponed a vote on the project until shelter locations were identified. However, there appeared to be support among the selectmen for banning alcohol advertising on the shelters, should the Town proceed with contract negotiations.

### Grant and Funding Opportunities

Mount Auburn has offered to fund tobacco prevention initiatives through its Sanborn grant. Mary Johnson and Mary DeCoursey, from Mount Auburn, have reached out to AYHSC for help coordinating these initiatives, which need to be completed by December. Carlene suggested hiring Chris Brett (a former AHS student and magician) to put on a magic show for elementary school students. Chris has worked with Carlene on tobacco prevention in the past, and has incorporated this theme into his shows. Carlene said she would contact Chris. In addition, Mount Auburn (Sanborn Foundation) has agreed to fund tobacco compliance checks, which will be conducted by AYHSC and the Arlington Board of Health.

Mount Auburn also has funding available for local communities to address six health priority areas, including Youth Substance Use, Youth Access to Services, Youth Mental Health, Adult Mental Health, Obesity and Active Living, and Crime and Safety. Mary DeCoursey explained that Mount Auburn will channel funds through the local CHNA (Community Health Network Area). The CHNA will be responsible for determining funding criteria. According to Mary, Mount Auburn will make available \$250,000 a year for five years.

### Discussion Topic: Addressing Incidents of Public Youth Drunkenness

Coalition members expressed concern over several recent incidents of youth drunkenness in the community and at school events (dances and athletic events). When these incidents occur off school grounds, students are not subject to school-based consequences. However, they are subject to MIAA consequences. Charlie noted that he relies on the professional opinion of police, even in the absence of a Breathalyzer test, to enforce MIAA consequences. Bryan informed the group that police cannot arrest youth solely for being drunk. They can arrest if they observe youth in possession of alcohol. The police may put an intoxicated youth in protective custody. Generally police prefer not to take youth back to the station, and would rather contact a parent or another responsible adult, and have them take custody of the intoxicated youth. Bryan also noted that protective custody only deals with alcohol, not drugs. Coalition members discussed ways to address this issue, including parent education, a social norms campaign targeting adults in the community, and increased enforcement at school-based events.

### **DFC Year 3 Work Plan**

#### **Working Group Topics**

Due to lengthier than planned conversations about the preceding topics, Coalition members did not discuss the DFC Year 3 Work Plan, nor did they break up into small working groups. These activities will be folded into the next monthly meeting.

**Adjournment:** Next Coalition Meeting: November 18, 2010

\*Charlie asked that the next meeting include a discussion on Volunteer Day at Arlington High School this spring.

